

Delivering on a promise made to catastrophically disabled veterans to lift the burden of costly co-payments, and working to support those who care for our men and women injured in battle, today President Obama signed into law two bills authored by Rep. Debbie Halvorson (IL-11) to eliminate co-payments for catastrophically disabled veterans and support caregivers of veterans.

"Today represents a giant leap forward in the way that we thank our veterans for their service. These new laws will provide peace of mind to those who have kept us safe serving throughout the world, and will give our caregivers the training and assistance they need to take care of our injured veterans," said Halvorson.

"When my stepson, a captain in the Army Special Forces, was injured in Afghanistan - I spent time at Walter Reed looking after him and interacting with other families. I spoke with so many other loved ones who were beginning their second battle - the battle to rehabilitate. It's a battle not just borne by our brave soldiers, but by their families as well. And I came away from that experience resolved to help our caregivers and soldiers recuperate with all of the resources possible. They deserve no less. This legislation thanks them for their service, and provides new assistance to help them live their lives after their enormous sacrifice on behalf of our freedom."

The legislation signed into law, S.1963, *Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act*, passed contained two major pieces of legislation written by Halvorson. The first bill, H.R.1335, the

*Disabled Veterans' Health Care Fairness Act*

, will eliminate co-payments and other fees for catastrophically disabled veterans who receive medical or nursing home care from the Department of Veteran Affairs. The first piece of legislation Halvorson introduced in Congress, H.R.1335 will provide peace of mind and financial security disabled veterans, allowing them to focus on their health and wellbeing.

Also included in the bill and authored by Halvorson was H.R.2898, the *Wounded Warrior Caregiver Assistance Act*.

This legislation will authorize the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide support services to those caring for wounded warriors. Support services authorized by Halvorson's legislation include caregiver training, counseling and mental health services, and respite care for family and other caregivers of all veterans, giving them the help they need to care for men and women who have served. It also provides health care and a stipend for caregivers living with severely wounded veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Supporting the efforts voted on by Halvorson to fight for our veterans, veterans advocacy organizations such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars have stated that this legislation will, "make a profound difference to veterans", while the American Legion said it, "offers bold solutions to major challenges facing service members, veterans, and their families."

The final vote in favor of S.1963 was unanimous in both the House and the Senate. To find out more about Congresswoman Halvorson's record on veterans, [click here](#).

For video of a press conference the Congresswoman held regarding this bill, please [click here](#) , and for video of a caregiver affected by this bill speaking about its benefits, please [click here](#)

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